



Satellite image with enhanced low cloud-top temperatures (degrees C) for 7:15 a.m. EST (NOAA)

Agricultural Weather Highlights - Tuesday - April 8, 2003

- ***In the West***, warm, dry weather favors spring fieldwork and winter wheat development.
- ***On the Plains***, warmer air is overspreading ***Montana***, coaxing later-developing winter wheat out of dormancy. Meanwhile, cool weather lingers across the ***central and southern Plains***, slowing wheat development but maintaining low evaporation rates. Nevertheless, topsoil moisture continues to diminish across much of ***Oklahoma and northern Texas***.
- ***In the Corn Belt***, rain and snow showers are diminishing, but cool weather persists. The recent turn toward cool, wet weather has slowed ***Midwestern*** fieldwork and winter wheat development, but improved soil moisture in preparation for spring planting.
- ***In the South***, flood watches are posted from the ***central Gulf Coast to southern Virginia*** in preparation for another round of heavy rain. The sudden turn toward wet weather is slowing or halting ***Southern*** planting progress, following several weeks that were mostly favorable for spring fieldwork.

Outlook: Unsettled weather will persist across the ***eastern U.S.*** for the remainder of the week, as a developing storm system moves slowly northeastward from the ***Gulf of Mexico***. Periods of snow, sleet, and freezing rain are likely across the ***Ohio Valley and Northeast***, while another round of locally heavy rain will fall in the ***Mid-Atlantic and Southeastern States***. Elsewhere, a broad area of high pressure will bring dry, milder weather to the ***Plains, Rockies, and Southwest***, while scattered showers will accompany a weak cold front in the ***Pacific Northwest***. The NWS 6-10 day outlook for April 13-17 calls for a warming trend across the ***eastern half of the nation***, where near- to above-normal temperatures are forecast. Meanwhile, cooler-than-normal weather will return to much of the ***West***. Above-normal precipitation is likely from ***California to the southern Plains***, which may slow fieldwork but will benefit winter grains and spring-sown crops. Elsewhere, mostly dry weather is forecast to return to the ***East***, while generally light precipitation is expected across the ***northern half of the U.S.***, including the ***northern Plains*** and the ***Midwest***.

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